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SOVIET FIGURE SKATERS IMPRESSIVE AT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Concordia University had the rare privilege of hosting five Olympic Gold Medalists from the Soviet Union. Accompanying the Soviet Figure Skating team, which arrived in Montreal on February 23rd were Irina Rodnina and Aleksandr Zaitsev, Gold Medalist Pairs; Vladimir Kovalev, Gold Medalist Men's Singles; and Irina Moiseeva and Andrei Minenkov, Gold Medalist Ice Dancing Pair. Irina Rodnina and Aleksandr Zaitsev are regarded as the most distinguished figure skaters in the world today, having won five consecutive World Championships and two Olympic Gold Medals.

In preparation for the 1978 World Championships to be held in Ottawa from March 7th to 12th, the Soviets trained at the Concordia Rink on the Loyola Campus.

A research exchange seminar was held by the Department of Bio-Physical Education faculty with Soviet sports medicine specialists accompanying the team. Dr. Edmund F. Enos of Concordia University and Dr. Yuri Goncharov of the Soviet Union were the Seminar leaders.

Dr. Enos was impressed with the superior level of physical fitness of the Soviet skaters ... "Most Canadians will be surprised to learn that the Soviet Figure Skaters in terms of cardiovascular efficiency are in better condition than the Soviet Army Hockey Team. In comparing the physiological data we have on the Red Army Hockey Team with the figure skaters' aerobic capacity, it is evident that the latter are 20% better conditioned than the hockey players."

The area that most interested the Soviet sports medicine specialists was the 3S flexibility exercise program being recommended by Concordia's faculty of Bio-Physical Education. The Soviet opinion was that this program could be of significant benefit to figure skaters and other athletes in terms of the prevention of athletic injuries through increased amplitude of movement.